

Treat the Flu



Know when to stay home. Know when to seek medical attention.

When to stay home

Even though flu symptoms (such as fever, cough, muscle aches, a sore throat, fatigue, weakness and loss of appetite) can make you feel really sick and can last for several days, in most cases you can care for yourself at home.

- Rest
- Drink plenty of fluids – to avoid dehydration
- Take ibuprofen or acetaminophen for aches and fever

Avoid spreading the flu:

- Wash your hands frequently
- Regularly clean frequently touched surfaces such as door handles with normal household disinfectants
- Stay home until you are fever-free for 24 hours AND you are feeling better
- Cover your coughs and sneezes with your arm, not your hand
- Keep at least two metres from household members and friends
- Postpone going out and getting your vaccine until after you are well

When to see your physician or primary care provider

If you are pregnant or have a medical condition related to heart, lungs or immune system, see your physician or primary care provider within 48 hours of the onset of the symptoms.

If you don't have underlying conditions and one or more of your flu symptoms get worse, seek medical assessment from your family physician or primary health care provider.

When to go to a hospital emergency department

If symptoms become severe – such as shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, lips turning blue, extreme weakness or passing out – go to a hospital emergency department.

Do not go to the emergency department to confirm that your illness is the flu, to get tested, to get vaccinated or to be cleared to resume your regular activities.

For more information

For information on H1N1 treatment and vaccination clinics, call the Ottawa Public Health Information Line at 613-580-6744 to speak to a public health nurse or visit ottawa.ca/health. This web site also has a new online decision aid to help you assess the severity of your child's flu symptoms.



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